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Carl Schif Hartz
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BRIEF VIEW

OF

FACTS,

WHICH GAVE RISE

TO THE

New-York Evangelical Missionary Society
of Young Men,

TOGETHER WITH THE CONSTITUTION.

PUBLISHED BY DIRECTION OF THE SOCIETY.

NEW-YORK:

PRINTED BY DAY & TURNER,

No. 53 Beaver-street.

1817.

BRISTOL VIEW

FACTS

WHICH HAVE BEEN

THE NEW YORK MEDICAL ASSOCIATION
OF BRISTOL VIEW

CONCERNING WITH THE CONSTITUTION

PREPARED BY DIRECTION OF THE SOCIETY

NEW-YORK

PRINTED BY DAY & TURNER

No. 63 Cover Street

1811

BRIEF VIEW, &c.

DEFERENCE to ourselves, if not to the public, demands an explanation of the origin and design of the NEW-YORK EVANGELICAL MISSIONARY SOCIETY OF YOUNG MEN. An event of so much notoriety as the secession of more than one hundred young men from an Institution, whose professed object is "The propagation of the gospel of Jesus Christ," cannot at first view, but be regarded with sentiments of regret. At an age of the world, when the various denominations of Christendom, begin to feel, "that they have attached too much importance to the things in which they differ, and not enough to those in which they agree;" when the dissemination of the gospel is the great and common cause, which unites the affections, the prayers and the exertion of the great family of believers; and in the promotion of which they already begin to find a grave for their party spirit and sectarian prejudices: nothing but considerations of commanding influence can justify a disjunction of missionary labors. "Charity suffereth long;" but there is a point beyond which christian forbearance cannot be extended, and when the "wisdom that cometh from above" demands a struggle, "not only to extend the Redeemer's Kingdom abroad, but maintain its independence at home."

Considerations of this imperative character *did exist*, and led to the organization of this infant Institution. On the 23d of January, 1809, a number of young men of different religious denominations in the city of New-York, formed themselves into a society, "for the purpose of raising a fund to aid in promoting the objects of the New-York Missionary Society." So unexpected was the success, and so hopeful the promise of this Institution, that on the 14th February, 1816, it resolved on the future management of its own funds independently of the parent society. It was no longer "The Assistant New-York Missionary Society," but the "Young Men's Missionary Society of New-York."

Though it was expected, that this Institution would consecrate its efforts to the great work of disseminating the gospel, without descending to the littleness of party distinctions; circumstances of no equivocal import, very early indicated that there were some unhappy jealousies in the Board of Directors on the subject of Christian Theology. A studious effort to avoid bringing the points of difference into view, together with the spirit of mutual conciliation and confidence, which appeared to be gradually increasing, it was hoped would repress every thing like secret alienation, as well as remove the possibility of open rupture. But in this respect the fondest hopes were defeated. These miserable jealousies had never slept. At their recent session, on the 11th Nov. last, Mr Samuel Hanson Cox, without his own knowledge, was nominated to the Board as a suitable can-

didate for the missionary service. Mr. Cox was himself a member of the Missionary Society, and in October last, was licensed to preach the gospel by the *unanimous* vote of the "Presbytery of New-York." The minority were at no loss to determine that this nomination was not grateful to the majority of the Board. As the most compendious method of overruling it, and with the impression that the funds of the Society would not authorize the appointment of more than one Missionary in addition to the one in actual employment, the Rev. Arthur Joseph Stansbury, of the "Associate Reformed" church, was introduced to the Board as a rival candidate. With the hope of avoiding concussion, and with the desire to evince an exemption from party prejudice, the mover of the resolution nominating Mr. Cox, begged leave to insert the name of Mr. Stansbury, in conjunction with that of Mr. Cox:—thus placing the candidates of either side on equal ground. But the difficulty was neither removed nor diminished. The apprehension was too well grounded, that the object to be secured by the majority was not the appointment of Mr. Stansbury, so much as the rejection of Mr. Cox. The appearance of this determination, while it did not allay the fears of the minority, excited equal surprise and regret. Nothing but the thorny field of controversy now lay before them. Still reluctant however, to hazard the interests of a society hitherto so prosperous, anxious to avert the probable issues of a public conflict, most unwilling to embarrass the Redeemer's cause, by dissensions among his professed

followers, the minority were happy to have it understood, that the subject be informally referred to the Committee of Missions.

That Committee were convened the following Monday. The name of Mr. Cox was mentioned with diffidence and solicitude. No objection was made to his talents or piety. It was too well known to be disputed, that in both these particulars he enjoyed no small share of public confidence. The majority of the Committee however, had unhappily associated with the name of Mr. Cox, certain religious sentiments, which they deemed "unsound," and which they supposed to be inconsistent with the character of a useful Missionary. It was not to be concealed, that in the great outlines of truth, his views accorded rather with those entertained by Calvin, Edwards, Bellamy, Scott, Smalley, Dwight, Pearce, Ryland and Fuller, and, indeed, with the great body of the Christian world, at this period of enlightened piety, than with the incoherent and unintelligible dogmas with which local intolerance seems resolved to burden the church of Christ. If not to believe that we actually sinned in Eden, six thousand years before we were born ;---if not to believe that the inability of the unregenerate to comply with the terms of salvation, is the same as their inability to pluck the sun from his orbit ;---if not to believe that the depravity of man destroys his accountability ;---if not to believe that the atonement is made exclusively for the elect ;---if not to believe that the elect are invested with a title to eternal life, on principles

of distributive justice, and that, while destitute of regenerating and sanctifying grace;---if not to believe that the christian's love of God is founded in selfishness, as completely as the miser's love of gold;---if want of assent to these repulsive notions disqualifies a man for the Missionary service:---then doubtless Mr. Cox is disqualified. But if a cordial adherence to the truth, that through the sin of Adam all mankind are sinners, from the moment of their own existence;---that the inability of the unregenerate, though absolute, inculpates rather than excuses them; that notwithstanding his apostacy, man is still a free agent, and accountable for his character;---that the atonement is unlimited in its nature, and limited only in its application;---that the salvation of the elect is not of debt, but of grace;---that all holy affection, though caused by the Divine Spirit, is founded on the divine excellence, rather than the divine favour;---if a firm belief and cordial reception of these glorious truths, qualifies a man for the ministry of reconciliation:---then the minority have every reason to concur in the unanimous opinion of the Presbytery of New-York, that Mr. Cox is qualified.

Notwithstanding this diversity of sentiment, it has been well understood, that there was no reluctance on the part of the minority to co-operate with the majority, in any measures to advance the Missionary cause. While the minority loved the truth and designed to maintain it, it was far from their purpose and their wishes, that the spirit of theological controversy should ever creep into the Missionary So-

ciety, or these differences in doctrine ever be recognized in their appointment of Missionaries. Nor can they be accused of a single departure from this catholic principle. In the appointment of Mr. Cox, they asked no more than they were willing to give. Presuming that questions of similar import might hereafter agitate the Society, unless the present case should be avowedly decided as a precedent, the Committee agreed without a dissenting voice, though without a formal vote, to deliberate and decide upon the present nomination, as involving the principle, *Whether any man holding Mr. Cox's sentiments should be eligible to their employment?* With this important question before them, they separated without a decision: agreeing solemnly and prayerfully to review the whole subject and convene for their final decision on the following Friday.

On Friday, all were present except one in the minority. There was much inquiry and some discussion. After having received a full developement of Mr. Cox's views from a member of their own board, the Committee resolved, "That it is inexpedient to recommend Mr. Cox to the Board of Directors as a Missionary." The ground of this resolution was but one:—That the religious sentiments of Mr. Cox savoured so much of error, and contained so visibly the germ of heresy, that the Committee felt bound to withhold from him their sanction as a Missionary of the cross. The votes stood four for, and two against this resolution; when it was resolved *unanimously*, "That it is expedient to recommend to the Board the Rev. Arthur J. Stansbury as a Missionary."

The evening of the same day was to convene the Board of Directors to receive the report of this Committee. On the reading of this report it was moved, " That notwithstanding the decision of the Committee of Missions, Mr. Samuel H. Cox be appointed a Missionary in the service of the Society for the term of six months." After discussing this resolution at considerable length, the board determined, to follow the example of the Committee of Missions, and defer their decision to a further meeting. On Friday of the next week they met, when all the Directors were present. Either with the hope of avoiding a full discussion of the resolution on the table, or with the expectation that the minority would resist the proposal, it was moved by the majority, " That the further consideration of the proposition respecting the employment of Mr. Cox be deferred in order to consider the recommendation of the Committee of Missions respecting Mr. Stansbury. Whatever might have been the views of the minority of such a course of measures, they determined not to oppose them, and therefore cordially united with the majority in engaging Mr. Stansbury as their Missionary. The contrast between the conduct pursued by the minority, and that persisted in by the majority, must strike every christian eye and impress itself on every christian heart.

Not without the hope that the liberal sentiments of the minority in this appointment would soften the rigour of the majority, the motion was renewed for the appointment of Mr. Cox. Very considerable

discussion ensued. The minority used every effort to ward off and lighten the shock. They entreated the majority to avoid the hazard of a rash decision. They entreated them to regard the honour and prosperity of the common cause. They entreated them not to lose sight of the grand object of the Institution, and forget the claims of the perishing heathen. But it was all in vain. A tide had set in which could not be turned out of its course; a torrent which it was hopeless to resist; a deluge of intolerance which threatened to sweep away every mound, and in its progress, to desolate the fairest portions of the Redeemer's heritage. The lamentable decision was passed, negating the appointment of Mr. Cox as a Missionary, and virtually recognizing the principle, that no man of similar views could be patronized by the Board. The votes on this question stood twelve to six. Two members of the Board at heart with the minority, from considerations of peculiar delicacy which did them honour, declined voting; who from considerations of high attachment to truth and justice, which have done them greater honour, have since connected themselves with the newly organized Institution, and accepted a seat in its Direction.

There is something in the retrospect of what is wrong that goads the mind. After all the promptness with which it is accomplished, the aspect of evil after it is done, is ugly and distressing. The deed was performed; and it was fondly thought that some misgivings of heart were discoverable on the part of the majority. The inquiry was made by the minority and reiterated by the less determined of the majority, "Is

there no way in which the breach can be healed?" Lest it should be imagined by some of the majority, and lest the intimation should possibly be suggested at some future period, that the minority were contending for an individual, rather than those whom he represented, and were more attached to the name of Mr. Cox, than to the principle involved in their discussion, they submitted the proposition on the spot, though not by a formal resolution, *to unite with the majority in declaring it to be inexpedient to appoint Mr. Cox, provided the majority would yield the principle, that a licentiate, or minister in good standing, holding Mr. Cox's sentiments, should not be considered as an outlaw from the missionary service.* This proposition was rejected with a tone of such decision by the leaders of the majority, that there was no other alternative, than for the minority, either silently to withdraw from the Society, or bring the whole subject before them at their annual meeting, which was just at hand. To the latter course they were urged as well by "a multitude of of counsellors," as by every correct sentiment of duty to themselves and the church of God. Especially did they consider the claims of the Society imperative, because of the fourteen congregations of which it was composed, no less than six of its Directors were from the Reformed Dutch Church in Garden-street. Whatever might be the views of the great body of the Society of the points of faith discussed in the Board, the minority did not believe that they would justify the Directors in making these differences the governing principle of their conduct in the appointment of Mis-

sionaries. At the close of their annual meeting therefore, a brief statement of what had transpired in the Board, was succeeded by the following

RESOLUTION: "Whereas it appears that some
 "unhappy differences of opinion, concerning certain
 "religious doctrines, have existed in the minds of the
 "Directors of this Society, and that these differences,
 "though involving nothing inconsistent with the Con-
 "stitution or object of this Society, have unduly in-
 "fluenced the Board of Directors in their appoint-
 "ment of Missionaries: therefore,

"*Resolved*, that the Society [disapprove such mea-
 "sures as have been pursued by the Board, recogniz-
 "ing the differences abovementioned, as the govern-
 "ing principles of their conduct, and] most earnestly
 "recommend to them, in their proceedings as Direc-
 "tors, to leave out of view all those disagreements in
 "sentiment, which may have a tendency to weaken
 "the union and paralyze the efforts of this once har-
 "monious Association." After much altercation and
 unwearied effort to avoid the discussion, by repeated
 motions of "amendment"—by the introduction of
 "substitutes"—and by one unmanly effort at an "in-
 definite postponement;"—the minority were permitted
 to enter upon the discussion, having stricken out of
 the original resolution, the clause expressly disapprov-
 ing the conduct of the Directors. The discussion was
 long. The points of difference in religious opinion
 were necessarily brought into view, opposed by the
 one party, and defended by the other. In the course
 of the argument the minority freely referred to the Sa-

cred Scriptures in justification of their views ; feeling it their duty to maintain the principles they avowed, by unequivocal declarations of the word of God, rather than by denouncing the opinions of other men, or by appealing to human authorities. The course they pursued however did not pass without reprehension. They were not a little surprized to hear a Rev. gentleman of the majority rise and express his hope, that if any person should introduce arguments from the Bible in support of his positions, he should be considered out of order ; adding, that if this course were admitted, the discussion might be protracted through the winter. Nor was their mortification diminished, to hear another Rev. gentleman of the majority concur in this extraordinary proposal. Safe as such a measure would have proved to the majority, and little as they wished to be incumbered with Scripture testimony, happily no question was formally taken on the subject. The period had not yet arrived, when by a solemn vote of a religious assembly, quotations from the word of God should be declared “ out of order,” in the discussion of a Theological question.

After several long evenings, the strength and patience of the Society were exhausted. As the discussion drew toward a close, and it was seen that a division in the Society would be the inevitable result of a vote implicitly sanctioning the conduct of the Directors, the minority resolved to make one more effort to save from impending ruin, an Institution reared by united labors, and cemented by united prayers and tears. They expressed their willingness to strip the resolution on the ta-

ble of every thing that should have a retrospective influence; they were anxious to overlook all that was past, provided they could have some pledge of toleration for the time to come. Unwilling to relinquish this last, though almost forlorn hope, they begged the privilege of submitting a Resolution, simply recognizing *the principle*, "That licentiates or ministers of
 "the gospel in good standing in the church of Christ,
 "and acknowledged to be sound in the faith, by a
 "Judicatory of either the 'Dutch Reformed,' 'Associate Reformed,' or 'Presbyterian Churches',
 "and who possess in the judgment of the Directors,
 "the other proper qualifications as Missionaries, shall
 "be *indiscriminately* employed by the Society."
 More than this, the minority consented not to ask; less, it was thought the majority could not give. The only question then was, whether, irrespective of their differences of sentiment, the Society would, upon principles that were impartial and honorable, combine their efforts in the Missionary cause.

It was the joy of the minority to be permitted to live in an age of the world which calls upon them to unite with men, differing indeed from them in important articles of faith, but according with them in the great designs of glory to God and good will to men. The heathen were perishing in their blood. It was no time to foster the spirit of alienation and bigotry. The glorious cause of truth and righteousness was going on. The fields were whitening to the harvest. From every desert and every mountain the cry was reverberating in our ears, "Thrust ye in the sickle!"

A sphere of action was opening upon the rising generation such as the world never saw. The minority did hope that the majority would yet tread back their ground with the magnanimity of christian heroism ;—or, if they revolted at this, that they would welcome this last proposal, would rejoice to strike their hands with ours in this holy league, and wherever else we might admit them, eternally banish all our differences of sentiment from this hitherto harmonious Society. But what were their feelings when the proposition, in a manner how little resembling the christian spirit will never be forgotten, was repelled as “cowardly”—and promptly, though reluctantly withdrawn. Their utmost fears were now realized, and the hope of conciliation forever extinguished. There remained the sweet conviction, that an invisible and almighty hand would yet be discovered and exalted in this unsearchable providence, and that there was ONE on the throne who was able to redeem the pledge, that “The wrath of man should praise the Lord, and the remainder of wrath He would restrain.” The yeas and nays being called for, the question was decided by a majority of *one hundred and eighty-two to ninety-one*. Two hundred and fourteen members of the Society were absent, and a very considerable number of those present, declined voting.

By this ruthless blow was this Fair Temple cleft to its base. If solicitude, and entreaty, and tears could have availed, it would have stood firm and risen high. But the blow that severed it, laid the deep and broad foundation for an edifice, whose triumphal arch and lofty dome it is hoped will be seen from afar. Abundant thanksgiving is due to the

Great Head of the church, that we have been carried through the conflict, and that in the darkest season, the pillar and the cloud were before us. "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but to thy name give glory, for thy mercy and thy truth's sake!" It has been an event which in prospect we deplored, and which in its approaches, has been resisted by every expedient which truth and charity could dictate. It has been a struggle for all that is dear in religious liberty. It has been a conflict for gospel truth. It has been the birth-pang of the daughter of Zion for the souls of the heathen. But the agony is over. "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; *persecuted*, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed." Though disfranchised, we inherit; though excommunicated, we commune; though amputated from the body, we "hold the head." While "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof," our purpose is to breathe his vital air, and "display a banner because of the truth." "And this will we do, if God permit." It is of little purpose, that we should be thought to have gained the victory; it is sufficient to have gained a release from that spirit of intolerant bigotry, to which we are willing to bid adieu forever.



Immediately after the meeting at which the discussions abovementioned were concluded, the minority proceeded to organize a new Society. They had the satisfaction to see a numerous meeting, when the Constitution was adopted, and to hear it stated at a meeting of the Society on the 13th January 1817, that more than 400 gentlemen had been admitted members including those who first signed the Constitution.

The Board of Directors at their first meeting unanimously resolved to employ Mr. Samuel H. Cox as a Missionary of the Society.

CONSTITUTION
OF THE
NEW-YORK EVANGELICAL
MISSIONARY SOCIETY OF YOUNG MEN,
INSTITUTED

DECEMBER 27th, 1816.

ARTICLE FIRST.

This Society shall be known by the name of the
NEW-YORK EVANGELICAL MISSIONARY SOCIETY OF
YOUNG MEN.

ARTICLE SECOND.

The object of this Institution, shall be, the propa-
gation of the Gospel of **JESUS CHRIST.**

ARTICLE THIRD.

Any person recommended by at least two mem-
bers as friendly to the object of the Society, and of
regular moral deportment, may become a member,
provided he be approved by a majority of the Board
of Directors.

Every person thus elected, shall sign the Constitu-
tion previously to his being admitted to a seat in the

member, at the time of subscribing the Con-

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stitution, shall pay a sum of not less than *Fifty Cents*, and afterwards a monthly sum of *Twenty-five Cents*. A payment of *Fifty Dollars* by any member shall be deemed a full commutation for his monthly dues.

ARTICLE FOURTH.

The Officers of this Society shall consist of a President, three Vice-Presidents, a Treasurer, a corresponding Secretary, and a recording Secretary, who, together with thirteen Managers, shall form a Board of Directors.

The President for the time being, of any Society Auxiliary to this, shall be *ex-officio* a Director of this Society.

No person shall be eligible as an Officer or Manager, unless he be between twenty-one and forty years of age, and a member in full communion in some church.

The Officers and Managers shall be chosen by ballot, the Officers separately, the Managers by general ticket, at the anniversary meeting.

ARTICLE FIFTH.

It shall be the duty of the Directors to form their own bye-laws, and to take such measures, relative to the funds and all the other concerns of the Society, as they may judge best calculated to promote the interests of the Institution.

They shall meet at least once in each month for the transaction of business. Seven of their number present shall constitute a quorum.

They shall have power to fill their